

Applic. No.: 10/016,864

Amdt. Dated September 23, 2004

Reply to Office action of June 29, 2004

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Reconsideration of the application is requested.

Claims 1 and 3-13 remain in the application. Claims 1 and 4 have been amended. Claim 2 has been cancelled.

In the section entitled "Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103" on pages 3-5 of the above-mentioned Office action, claims 1, 3, and 5-7 have been rejected as being unpatentable over Chiyoe (Japanese Patent Application publication 09-312430) in view of Pepper (US Pat No. 5,926,494) and Graham (US Pat. No. 3,727,219) under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a); claims 8-9 have been rejected as being unpatentable over Chiyoe in view of Pepper and Brauch et al. (US Pat. No. 5,553,088) under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a); claims 10-13 have been rejected as being unpatentable over Chiyoe in view of Pepper and Itai (US Pat. No. 5,148,441) under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a).

The rejections have been noted and claim 1 has been amended in an effort to even more clearly define the invention of the instant application. More specifically, the feature of claim 2 has been added to claim 1. Since claim 2 contains allowable subject matter as indicated by the Examiner in the section

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entitled "Allowable Subject Matter" on pages 5-6 of the Office action, claim 1 is now believed to be allowable.

Applicants acknowledge the Examiner's statement in the section entitled "Allowable Subject Matter" on pages 5-6 of the above-mentioned Office action that claims 2 and 4 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

The feature of claim 2 has been added to claim 1. Since claim 4 is dependent on allowable claim 1, it is believed to be allowable in dependent form.

In view of the foregoing, the early issuance of a Notice of Allowance of claims 1 and 3-13 is solicited.

In the event the Examiner should still find any of the claims to be unpatentable, counsel would appreciate a telephone call so that, if possible, patentable language can be worked out.

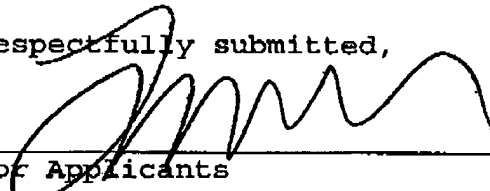
If an extension of time for this paper is required, petition for extension is herewith made. Please charge any fees which might be due with respect to 37 CFR Sections 1.16 and 1.17 to

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the Deposit Account of Lerner and Greenberg, P.A., No. 12 -
1099.

Respectfully submitted,

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For Applicants

YC

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